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Approved For Release 2002/01/08 : CIA-RDP81-00142R000200090031-0

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: John F. Blake
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT: Response to Paragraph 5 of Your Memorandum
for the Record, Conversation with Dr.
Brzezinski, dated 15 March 1978 (U/AIUO)

return for rewrite

1. (U/AIUO) Action Requested: None; for your information only.

2. (U/AIUO) To the best of our knowledge, the CIA has never had a requirement for interpreter ability in official situations. Accordingly, the Agency does not test (oral) interpreter capability, does not maintain an official record of interpreter capability, nor does the Office of Training's Language School have the capability to train in this highly specialized skill.

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3. (U/AIUO) Various Directorate of Operations' components [REDACTED] have a general awareness of their own interpreting capabilities in a number of languages, but these interpreting capabilities are useful primarily in informal interpreting situations or in debriefing situations where questions may be restated several times and clarification requested.

4. (S) Although we cannot evaluate their interpreting capability and they are not trained interpreters, the 31 December 1977 Language Register indicates that the Agency has two native-level Polish speakers and two native speakers of Serbo-Croatian. Both of the latter speak Serbian and Tito speaks the Croatian variant. The two

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Dr. Brzezinski,
14 March 1978

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STATSPEC 5. Not only did the President have trouble with the translator in Poland but there was trouble last week with the translator used for Tito's visit. Apparently the State Department doesn't have its own translators for some of these languages and simply goes out and hires people (security implications?). I told Brzezinski that I would give him a catalog of what our translator potential is, both from our language school and from our [redacted] in the Agency. We're talking now about oral translations, not written. I'd like to simply give him a list of the languages where we believe we have somebody who could be pressed into service for short periods of time to translate and how we grade their capability.

For the moment, he would specifically like to know what our capabilities are for Serbo-Croatian and Polish.

6. We discussed the proposed SCC meeting on charters. [REDACTED] came in and expressed the view that we were not moving ahead rapidly enough. The Senate Select Committee had expected substantive discussions with us in this period between their tabling their legislation and commencement of their hearings. He and Zbig wanted a meeting that would give a status report on how we were doing. Aaron thought Defense and Justice were ready to go. I contended I couldn't give them a status report because I'd deliberately allowed people until the 28th of March to come in with their positions. We agreed that a week after that, on the 5th of April, there would be an SCC meeting to get a status report from me. I told them I would be ready by then with a quick look at the submissions of all the departments/agencies to tell them two things:

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a. Areas where there were clear differences of opinion between the intelligence agencies which might have to come to the SCC for resolution;

b. Areas of primary concern where we were agreed there would have to be a strong effort to change the draft legislation.

I don't intend that these cover everything but primarily the highlights or sticking points. I don't think we should attempt to resolve them at this SCC meeting. I think we should stress the point that what we intend to do is to get resolution at the working level insofar as is possible and bring only a few issues to the SCC in the long run.

7. My trip to the Middle East. Brzezinski thought I should delay it a week or cancel it. I told him delay was out of the question; we'd already made arrangements with three kings, two presidents and one prime minister, and one of the kings had even changed his travel schedule to accommodate my visit. He agreed we should go ahead.

I asked for guidance on some of the things to say. What he gave me is in a separate memo of conversation.

8. I described my plan for reprogramming assets in order to man the NITC and RMS.

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[REDACTED]
STANSFIELD TURNER
Director

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